

# Memorandum



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**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Del D. Borgsdorf

**SUBJECT:** Council Study Session on  
Policy Priorities

**DATE:** February 18, 2000

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## FOR INFORMATION ONLY

### **BACKGROUND**

At a Committee of the Whole held on December 15 and 16, 1999, the City Council provided feedback on the City's core services as called for at Milestone 1 of *Investing in Results*. At that meeting, the City Council focused on the core services in the departments as the building blocks for City-level services that the community and our customers expect.

The City Council expressed a desire to schedule a follow-up study session to further discuss the framework for citywide services and the goals and priorities for service delivery. That study session was held on January 20, 2000. At the January 20<sup>th</sup> study session, the City Council expressed an interest in continuing their discussion of policy priorities. The study session is scheduled for February 28, 2000 at the Mexican Heritage Plaza.

This staff report summarizes the themes of the City Council's discussion at the January 20, 2000 study session. The report also presents a framework for discussion of the City Council's policy priorities at the February 28<sup>th</sup> study session.

### **ANALYSIS**

At the January 20<sup>th</sup> study session, the City Council focused on a higher level of City service delivery than the core service level discussed at the December 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Committee of the Whole. Specifically, the Council discussed their role in setting strategic direction, the various roles of the City in service delivery, the vision for San Jose, and strategies for investment to achieve the vision. Craig Holt, President of Managing Total Performance, Inc, the City's consultant assisting with *Investing in Results*, facilitated the discussion. The following themes arising from the 1/20 study session provide the framework for continuing the discussion on City policy priorities at the February 28<sup>th</sup> study session.

## **Setting Strategic Direction**

At the 12/15 and 12/16 Committee of the Whole, the Mayor and Council observed that setting strategic direction for service delivery must occur at a higher level than departmental core services and that it is their role to set the direction at that higher level. At the 1/20 study session, the Mayor and Council discussed their role in setting strategic direction at the City Service Area and Policy Priorities levels, as depicted on Attachment A.

Taking a community-wide perspective that transcends organizational boundaries, the Council is in the best position to set citywide strategic direction that drives investment and service-delivery decisions at the core service level. Based on this strategic direction, the organization can then direct energy and resources to best achieve the direction set by the Mayor and Council. The discussion at the February 28 study session is intended to provide further guidance on Policy Priorities to inform service delivery in City Service Areas and departmental core services.

## **San Jose's Role in Service Delivery**

At the 1/20 study session, the Mayor and City Council discussed the multiple roles the City of San Jose assumes in providing services to the community. The roles range from being a sole provider of a service to being an advocate for services provided by others. For the most part, however, the City works in partnership with other governmental, non-profit, and corporate entities to provide services. In some cases, San Jose is the lead agency, while in others San Jose provides complementary services to those provided by other lead agencies.

In an environment of limited resources and growing demands, the Council noted that they must set priorities for investment and service delivery within the context of the role San Jose plays relative to other service providers. The Council also observed that distinguishing among services San Jose must provide, those that are expected or desired by the community, and those that the community is willing to support is another important criterion for priority-setting. The various roles San Jose assumes in delivering services to the community will underpin the discussion of policy priorities at the 2/28 study session.

## **Vision for San Jose**

At the 1/20 study session, the City Council considered the following questions:

- What is your vision for the City Service Areas?
- What does success in the City Service Areas look like?
- What does the community need and expect in the City Service Areas?
- What would you like to accomplish for the community in the City Service Areas?

In responding to the questions, the Mayor and Councilmembers shared their vision for quality of life and quality of services in San Jose. This discussion began to frame the policy priorities that drive service delivery in the City Service Areas. Attachment B presents a list of seven (7) policy priority areas that reflect the Council's discussion on 1/20.

It is expected that the 2/28 session will provide a forum for further discussion on the policy priorities, as noted on the agenda presented in Attachment C. Craig Holt will again facilitate the Council discussion. In addition to making any desired changes to the list of policy priorities, the Council will consider the following questions to provide guidance to staff regarding the delivery of City Service Areas and core services:

- What does success in the Policy Priorities look like?
- What does the community need and expect in the Policy Priorities?
- What would you like to accomplish for the community in the Policy Priorities?

Time permitting, the Council will continue their discussion regarding an overall vision for the City of San Jose.

### **Investment Strategies**

In addition to discussing the vision for quality services in San Jose, the City Council made a number of observations regarding strategies for investment to achieve the vision. For the most part, the strategies noted by the Council related to making data-driven decisions to target investments that would achieve quality service levels throughout the City. The *Investing in Results* framework is designed to provide meaningful data and information for making these kind of investment decisions.

### **NEXT STEPS**

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Based on the comments about desired outcomes in the Policy Priorities, staff will develop performance measures for the City Service Areas to bring back to the Council in Spring, 2000 at Milestone 2 of Investing in Results.

Del D. Borgsdorf  
City Manager

Attachments